



City of Cambridge

Committee Report #2

IN CITY COUNCIL

January 25, 1999

COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to begin more financial negotiations to acquire land on Fulkerson Street opposite Ahern Field for the purpose of open space.

In City Council January 25, 1999

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "D. Margaret Drury".

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

Councillor Sullivan stated that if the City is going to get open space, it will be necessary to either buy it or take it by eminent domain.

Councillor Russell asked if Mr. Healy had any particular open space in mind for a conversion to soccer fields. Mr. Healy said that he did not; a selection would need to involve discussion with the community and the interested persons who would be impacted.

Councillor Sullivan asked whether the estimate for Fulkerson includes the space from closing Fulkerson Street. Mr. Maloney stated that it does not. Councillor Sullivan asked how much property the three parcels would result in when added to Ahern. Mr. Maloney stated that it would be over six acres; however the owners are not willing to sell.

Councillor Sullivan stated that he would advocate for purchasing the property. It would be the one parcel that would benefit three neighborhoods. The existing business is not beneficial to the neighborhood. There would not be a drastic loss in terms of tax revenue.

Mayor Duehay stated that he agrees. Land is not getting any less expensive. This is a lot of money, but East Cambridge has born the brunt of development.

Councillor Russell stated that she also agrees. This is a safer site than some of the others suggested.

Mr. Healy stated that this only works if Fulkerson Street is closed.

Councillor Sullivan then invited public testimony. Marie Shinkwin, Eighth Street, stated that her concern this evening is the ComEnergy site. The proposed development is too much. She asked what closing Fulkerson Street would do to traffic, especially on Eighth Street.

Councillor Toomey stated that this is a preliminary discussion. If the City Council decides it would like to go forward with the acquisition, there would be a full planning process with neighborhood involvement.

Gerry Bergman, Elm Street, stated that he believes it is a great idea to expand Ahern Field. He also spoke in support of acquiring 210 Broadway for open space. The Area Four Coalition put aside \$200,000 for this purchase two years ago. He would like to hear some discussion of this issue.

Councillor Sullivan stated that the sites being discussed tonight would make an existing site into a much larger and significant site.

Gerry Bergman stated that the Area Four Coalition has requested information about the 210 Broadway site for months and has not heard anything.

Councillor Sullivan referred him to the City Manager's report on this matter which was on the agenda of the last City Council meeting.

Mr. Healy stated that he has also looked at relocating the Department of Public Works (DPW) to the Mooney Street area and converting that site to open space, or a combination of open space and housing. This would remove the DPW operation from the middle of a residential neighborhood and allow a significant addition of open space. This is one of the possibilities that the new Green Ribbon Committee will be looking at, in an organized way.

Fred Fantini, Canal Street, thanked the City Council for its support for East Cambridge and urged the City Council to go forward with the Ahern Field expansion.

Cynthia Wall, 134 Otis Street, thanked the City Council for coming to East Cambridge. She has lived in Cambridge for four years. She has been researching prior planning reports. The need for open space has been mentioned since 1978. She requested that the Green Ribbon Committee include a resident from East Cambridge.

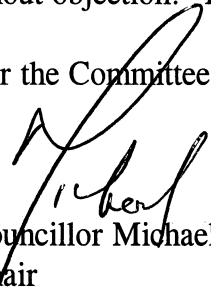
Councillor Sullivan moved that the City Manager begin more financial negotiations to acquire land on Fulkerson Street opposite Ahern Field for the purpose of open space.

Vice Mayor Galluccio stated that he supports this proposal and hopes that it is not exclusive of a partial taking at the ComEnergy site. The neighborhood has expressed great concern about the development.

Councillor Born stated that the additions to the Ahern Field would provide a very nice piece of open space right within the neighborhood. Also, she has not given up on the possibility of a zoning change to require the owner of the ComEnergy site to provide some sort of open space as part of development of that area. Councillor Born concluded that the City is moving in the right direction but a great deal of community support is necessary to keep up the momentum.

The motion passed on a voice vote without objection. The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

For the Committee,



Councillor Michael A. Sullivan
Chair

To The Honorable the City Council,

In preparation for tonight's Finance Committee hearing regarding open space in East Cambridge I have had some maps developed which focus in on 3 parcels of land on Fulkerson Street opposite Ahearn Field. These three parcels (2 full parcels and a section of a third) total approx. 146,858 sq. feet and have a projected market value of \$3,757,000 and currently pay \$88,776 in annual property taxes. While they have been identified because of their proximity to an existing public open space they are currently not for sale. Furthermore a discussion with the owners of two of the properties indicates that neither owner currently desires to sell. Therefore if the City were to acquire the land it would have to be accomplished through an eminent domain process. Additionally, the City has reason to believe that at least two of the properties have soil contamination issues that need to be addressed as well as demolition costs related to existing buildings. The table below is a rough estimate of acquisition, demolition, clean up and development costs associated with these three properties.

Acquisition	\$3,757,000	
Demolition*	\$ 300,000	
Clean Up*	\$ 400,000	
Development	\$ 800,000	to \$2,400,000
Total	\$5,257,000	to \$7,657,000

* Rough estimates

Also at the last meeting on East Cambridge open space a question was asked regarding what the total cost to the City would be for the acquisition, soil clean up and development as a recreation facility of the Commonwealth Energy site. Again as the property is not for sale, we must rely on third party estimates for clean up and we have not engaged an engineering/landscape firm for development plans. However using discussions with individuals knowledgeable about real estate and engineering I would offer the following estimates on the site.

	Range		
Acquisition ¹	\$31,900,000	To	\$38,280,000
Soil Clean Up ²	\$18,000,000	To	\$34,000,000
Site Development ³	\$2,500,000	To	\$7,500,000
Total	\$52,400,000	To	\$79,780,000

Source

1. Cambridge Board of Assessors
2. Lyme Properties
3. Engineering Estimates

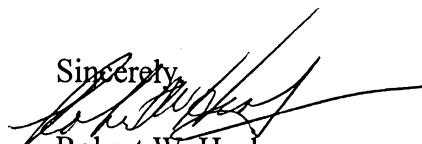
Sincerely,

 Robert W. Healy

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Property 1

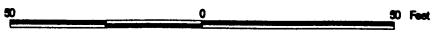
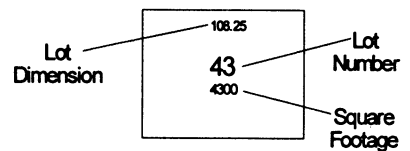
LAVERTY PROPERTY

Assessors' Map/Lot:	33/88
Property Location:	81 Fulkerson Street
FY99 Assessed Value:	1,276,500
FY99 Taxes:	\$34,785
Estimated Market Value:	\$1,500,000 (10/98 sale price)
Lot Square Feet:	25,449



City of Cambridge
Parcel Sheet

- Lot Line
- Building
- City Boundary
- Railroad

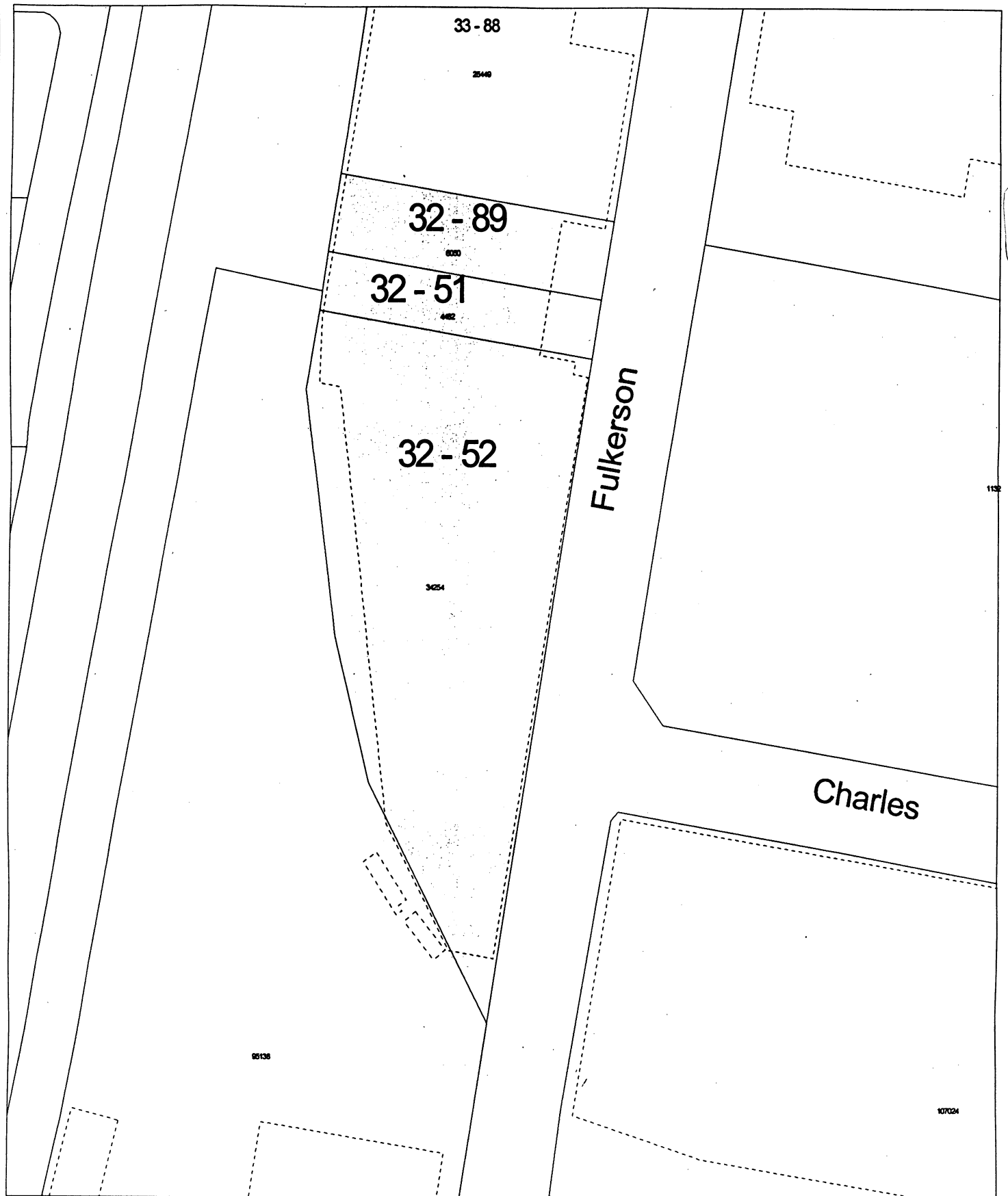


PROPERTY 1

Property 2

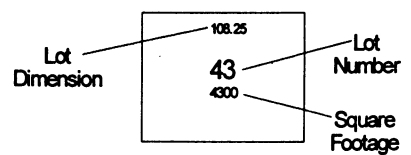
NORTHEAST REALTY

Assessors' Map/Lot:	32/51, 52, and 89
Property Location:	135 Fulkerson Street
FY99 Assessed Value:	1,470,000
FY99 Taxes:	\$40,058
Estimated Market Value:	\$2,000,000 (based on Property 1 sale price)
Lot Square Feet:	44,787



City of Cambridge
Parcel Sheet

- Lot Line
- Building
- City Boundary
- Railroad



50 0 50 Feet

PROPERTY 2



Property 3

Metropolitan Pipe

Assessors' Map/Lot: 31/20, 21, 108

Property Location: 303 Binney Street

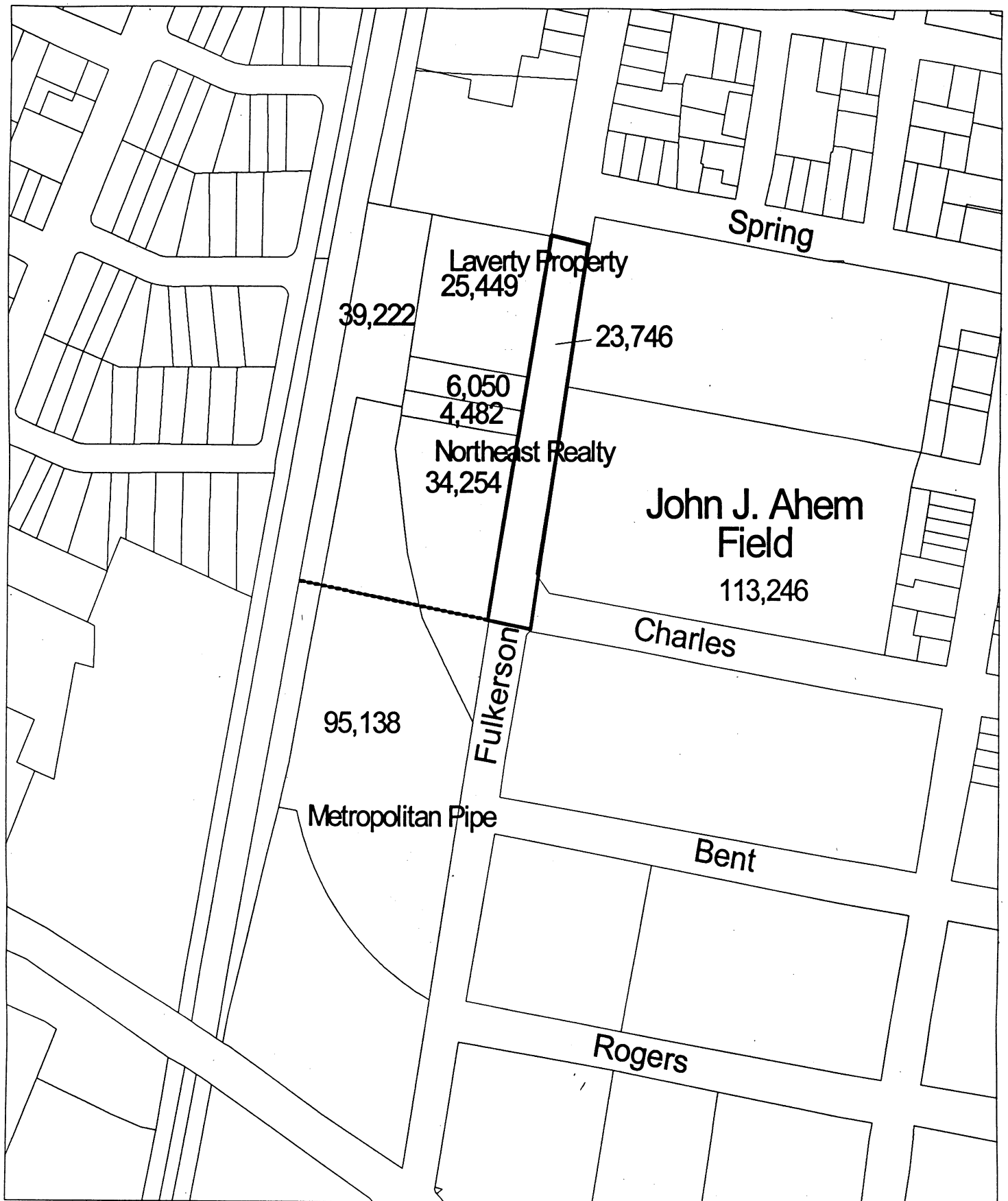
FY99 Assessed Value: portion under discussion: \$511,300

FY99 Taxes: portion under discussion: \$13,933

Estimated Market Value: \$257,000 (\$3.50 per square foot)

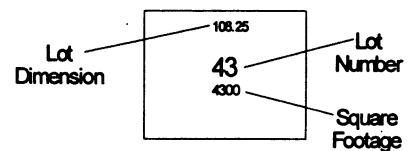
Lot Square Feet: portion under discussion: 76,622





City of Cambridge
Parcel Sheet

- Lot Line
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- Railroad



50 0 50 Feet

MAP A

Property 4

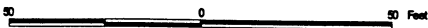
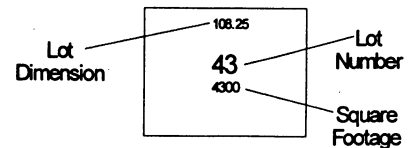
Old Budweiser Site

Assessors' Map/Lot:	32/53
Property Location:	117 Sixth Street
FY99 Assessed Value:	\$9,673,500
FY99 Taxes:	\$263,603
Estimated Market Value:	\$12,000,000
Lot Square Feet:	107,024



City of Cambridge
Parcel Sheet

- Lot Line
- Building
- City Boundary
- Railroad



PROPERTY 4



Property 5

ComEnergy's Potter Street Property

Assessors' Map/Lot:	29/44, 43, 13, 34, 42
Property Location:	27 Potter Street
FY99 Assessed Value:	\$8,860,600
FY99 Taxes:	\$241,451
Estimated Market Value:	\$13 million to \$15 million (\$35 per FAR foot)
Lot Square Feet:	147,660

29 - 44

101428

29 - 34

32591

42

4200

43

3110

13

2000

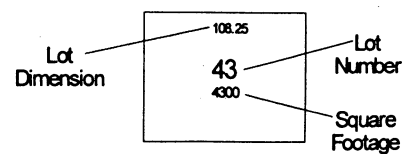
Potter

Third



City of Cambridge
Parcel Sheet

- Lot Line
- Building
- City Boundary
- Railroad



50 0 50 Feet

PROPERTY 5



Property 6

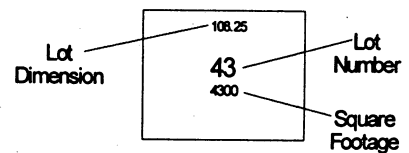
Clem Site

Assessors' Map/Lot:	14/38 and part of 40
Property Location:	364 Third Street
FY99 Assessed Value:	\$19,138,200
FY99 Taxes:	\$521,516
Estimated Market Value:	\$21,700,000 (8/19/98 sale price)
Lot Square Feet:	425,294



City of Cambridge
Parcel Sheet

- Lot Line
- Building
- City Boundary
- Railroad



0 50 Feet

PROPERTY 6



City of Cambridge

In City Council January 25, 1999

The Finance Committee held a public meeting on January 20, 1999, beginning at 6:15 p.m. in the Kennedy School Auditorium, 158 Spring Street, for the purpose of a follow-up discussion of eminent domain taking to increase open space in the East Cambridge neighborhood.

Present at the hearing were Councillor Michael A. Sullivan, Chair of the Committee, Mayor Francis H. Duehay, Vice Mayor Anthony D. Galluccio, Councillor Kathleen L. Born, Councillor Sheila T. Russell, Councillor Timothy J. Toomey, Jr., City Clerk D. Margaret Drury and Donna Lopez, Deputy City Clerk. Also present were Robert W. Healy, City Manager; Richard Rossi, Deputy City Manager; James Maloney, Assistant City Manager for Finance; Sally Powers, Executive Director, Assessor's Office; Louis DePasquale, Budget Director; Sandra Albano, Assistant to City Manager; and Rachael Seymour, Intern, City Manager's Office.

Councillor Sullivan convened the hearing and explained the purpose. He explained that this is a follow-up meeting to the October 27, 1998 hearing on this matter. He added that it is important to hold it now to make sure that if the Council wants to take action that will have budget implications, there is time to deal with the issue in the FY 2000 budget cycle. Councillor Sullivan then introduced Robert W. Healy, City Manager, to discuss the written material he provided for the committee (Attachment A).

Mr. Healy began with an explanation of eminent domain and stated that he has informed the City Council that he believes the cost of eminent domain taking for the ComEnergy site would be prohibitive. Mr. Healy stated that City staff has looked at other areas in East Cambridge, including the area across Fulkerson Street from Ahern Field at the Kennedy School. However, the City would be looking at costs of \$5,000,000-\$7,000,000. The owners of those parcels do not want to sell. The City would like to site a soccer field and children's play area. Mr. Healy stated that City staff will continue to look at options, but it is not easy. Acquisition is very difficult. A soccer field requires about two and one-half acres.

Mr. Healy noted that the City Council had directed him to appoint a Green Ribbon Committee to develop a plan for adding open space to the City. That committee is just about set. Mr. Healy stated that perhaps some existing open space, now used for softball, could be converted to soccer fields in the interim, as the Green Ribbon Committee develops the criteria and recommendations for an open space plan.

Committee Report #2

3- DP

A report from Councillor Michael A. Sullivan, Chair of the Finance Committee, for a hearing held on January 20, 1999, for the propose of a follow-up discussion of eminent domain taking to increase open space in the East Cambridge neighborhood.

In City Council January 25, 1999

Report Accepted
PLACED ON FILE

ORDER ADOPTED